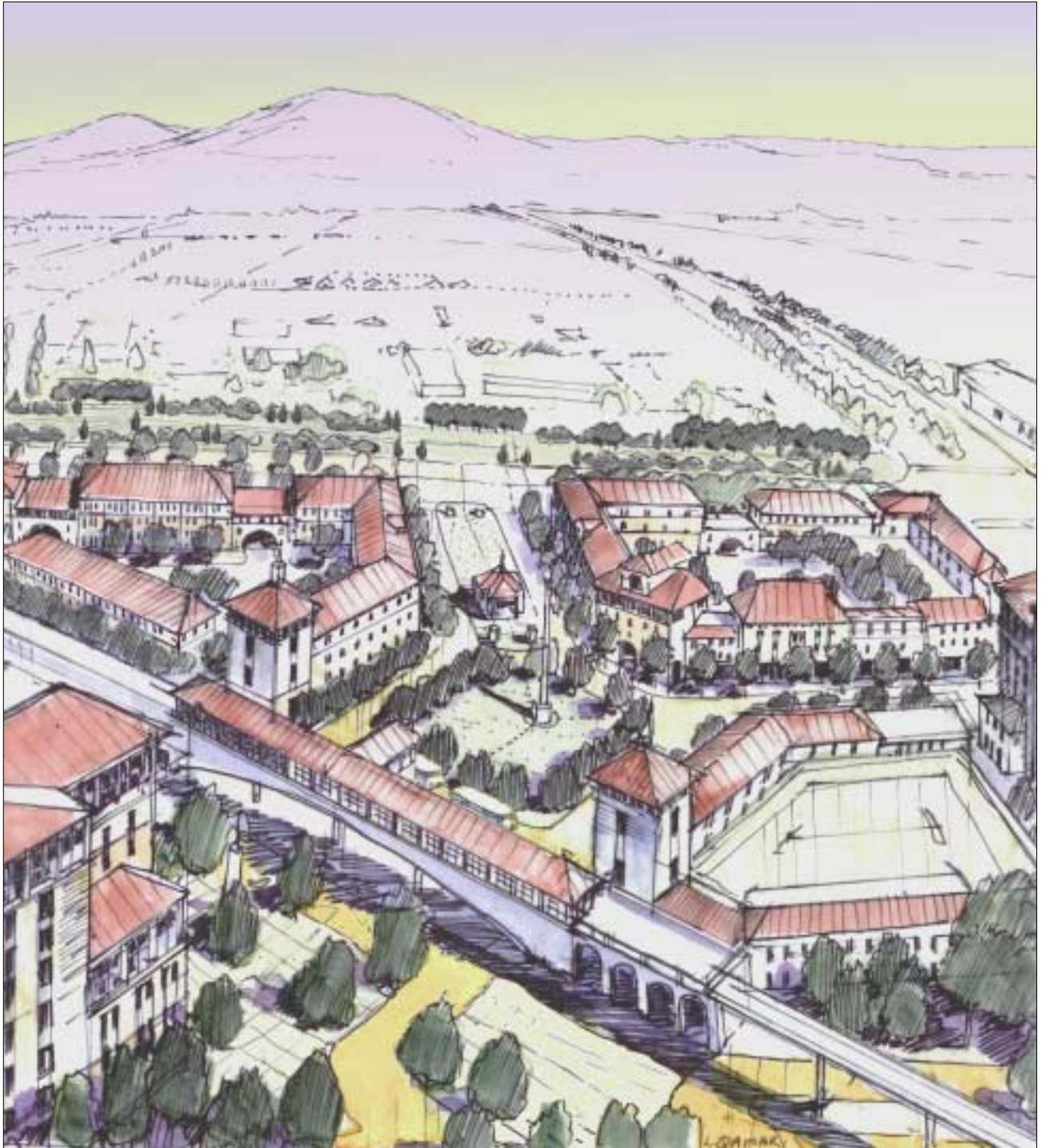


# PLEASANT HILL BART STATION AREA



## SUMMARY REPORT

OCTOBER 2001

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## PARTICIPATING AGENCIES

### *CONTRA COSTA COUNTY*

- Dennis Barry, Community Development Director
- James Kennedy, Redevelopment Director
- Maureen Toms, Principal Planner
- Steven Goetz, Community Development Department Transportation Planning Division
- Lisa Noble, Secretary

### *BAY AREA RAPID TRANSIT (BART) DISTRICT*

- Dan Richard, BART Director
- Jeff Ordway, Property Development Manager
- Patty Hirota-Cohen, Senior Real Estate Officer
- Joel Keller, BART Director
- June Ganletti, Government & Community relations

### *CONTRA COSTA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS*

- Donna Gerber, Supervisor, District 3
- Mark DeSaulnier, Supervisor, District 4
- Jay Lutz, Aide, District 3
- Marilyn Smith, Aide, District 4

### *OTHER AGENCIES*

- Margaret Stanzione, City of Walnut Creek Community Development Department
- Paul Richardson, City of Walnut Creek Community Development Department
- Shelly Poticha, Congress for the New Urbanism
- Judy Corbett, Local Government Commission
- Greenbelt Alliance, Evie Stiers

## LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES

- Kathy Boswell, Walden District Improvement Association
- Kris Hunt, Walden District Improvement Association
- Terry Flemming, Walden District Improvement Association
- Lynette Tanner-Busby, Contra Costa Centre Association

## DEVELOPMENT TEAM

- Mark Farrar, Millennium Partners
- William Mohr, Catalyst
- Craig Woolmington-Smith, Woolmington-Smith, Inc.

## CONSULTANT TEAM

### *LENNERTZ COYLE & ASSOCIATES, URBAN DESIGN*

- Bill Lennertz, Principal
- Steve Coyle, Principal
- Laurence Qamar, Principal
- Jeff Thierfelder, Project Manager
- Carol Collier, Designer

### *OTHER CONSULTANTS*

- Peter Katz, Author & Lecturer on New Urbanism
- Jeff Tumlin, Nelson Nygaard, Transit Planning
- Dena Belzer, Strategic Economics, Market Economics
- Abby Sigal, Strategic Economics, Market Economics
- Peg Stone, CSG Advisors, Financial Modeling
- Carrie Hamilton, CSG Advisors, Financial Modeling
- Tom Clausen, Fehr and Peers Associates, Transportation Planning
- Seth Harry, Seth Harry Associates, Urban Design and Retail Consulting
- Steve Price, Urban Advantage, Digital Imaging
- Daniel Parolek, Envision Design, Urban Design
- Kristen Paulsen, Communities by Design, Public Outreach Coordination

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# REPORT ORGANIZATION

## SECTION I. INTRODUCTION

The Introduction is an executive summary of the of the station area vision, the process that lead up to the creation of the plan, and the summary of the masterplan.

## SECTION II. BACKGROUND

The Background is a summary of the 30 year history of the Pleasant Hill BART station. This section explains the regional growth strategy context and the project's relationship with the principles of New Urbanism and Transit Oriented Development.

## SECTION III. PHYSICAL & FINANCIAL CONTEXT

The Financial Context describes the current site, market, and transportation conditions and their relationship to the plan.

## SECTION IV. PUBLIC PROCESS

The core of the public involvement process is the Charrette design process. An abbreviated log of the Charrette design process and a summary of stakeholder issues is included.

## SECTION V. THE PLAN

The Plan delineates the evolution of design that took place during the six day Charrette process and follow-up meetings. The illustrative plan describes the final master plan. The supporting documents to the master plan include the market, transit, transportation, and parking analyses.

## SECTION VI. APPENDICES

The Appendices include base data and background information from participants that led to the plan conclusions.

# I. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 THE VISION

The Pleasant Hill Bart Station is a major regional transportation hub for trains, busses, vans, and taxis. It serves an important role in the County's transportation strategy to reduce automobile trips. While the Station performs this function efficiently, for it to be an overall asset to the surrounding neighborhoods it requires improvement, or perhaps complete transformation. As a transit center, it is dominated by a seven story parking garage and acres of parking, surrounded by wide access roads. It is a place that about 6400 transit riders rush to and from each day and is therefore designed for fast and efficient movement.



*Aerial view of the Pleasant Hill BART Station area from the south.*

The following report describes a transformative vision for the Pleasant Hill Bart Station Area. It is the culmination of a vision that began over 20 years ago of a new station community where residents of nearby townhomes and apartments could take their daily walk to the station, perhaps stopping to drop off dry cleaning, fill a prescription, or enjoy a cup of coffee and the morning paper. Coming home, they could choose to take a bike ride on the trail, and then meet some friends at the restaurant nestled in Oak Park.

The Pleasant Hill BART Station will serve the surrounding communities as well. Currently, local residents must drive to downtown Walnut Creek to find the amenities that the station area will provide. In the future, many of those car trips will be replaced by shorter walking or bicycle trips to Pleasant Hill Station. The new transit-oriented community around the station will add value to the surrounding neighborhoods - transforming what used to be a utilitarian necessity into a true community asset.

## 1.2 THE PROCESS

Planning for the Pleasant Hill BART Station area first began in 1978 with a larger regional vision that included an emphasis on creating communities close to transit. A Specific Plan for the entire 140-acre Station Area (the BART station itself sits on 18 acres and is part of the larger Station Area) was developed in 1983 and was updated and amended in 1998. The Specific Plan calls for "transit-oriented development," around the Pleasant Hill BART Station - a development pattern of workplaces, housing, and shops surrounding the transit hub. The Specific Plan continues to be a critical component in Contra Costa County's strategy to accommodate regional growth. Since 1986, much of the 140-acre County redevelopment area that surrounds the station has been



## THE ILLUSTRATIVE DRAWINGS & THE CODES

The design team has prepared "Codes" - detailed regulations and specifications designed to assure that what was created in the Charrette is actually delivered on the ground. The codes, (including the Specific Plan) control key elements of the project's design, such as height, building placement and acceptable facade materials, permitted uses, and functional planning requirements such as parking and access. These codes are being refined and are not a part of this document.

Drawings, diagrams and other visual representations of the proposed community plan within this report are conceptual in nature and depict a series of design schemes that evolved over a period of months. While such illustrations represent a generalized vision of the plan, certain details may be inconsistent with one another and with the ultimate built scheme. For the most accurate description of the plan as proposed, refer to the Pleasant Hill BART Property Code.

built out. More than 2,400 housing units, two hotels, offices with more than 4,000 employees, and more than \$40 million in major public infrastructure improvements have been built within walking distance of the BART station. About 6,400 BART riders travel through the Station Area per day.

In 1995, a retail entertainment development was proposed for the station site. The concept was not supported by neighborhood interests and by surrounding communities and was subsequently withdrawn by the developer. The failed plan resulted in amendments to the Specific Plan in 1998 that prohibited large entertainment uses and limited the size of commercial development. The current master plan is subject to the 1998 amendments and the broader Specific Plan.

Much later, County Supervisor Donna Gerber, with the assistance of New Urbanism consultant Peter Katz, proposed a renewed effort on the project. The first step in this new approach featured a series of lectures by Peter Katz, author of "The New Urbanism: Toward an Architecture of Community." The community reacted favorably to New Urbanist concepts of lively, attractive public streets and plazas. Using this public interest as a foundation, a strategy was developed for a collaborative public planning process, or Charrette.

Lennertz Coyle & Associates, nationally recognized for their use of the Charrette process in urban design, was hired to lead a design team that included transportation, public involvement and financing consultants. This report is a summary of the Charrette, the physical, functional and financial base parameters, and the design schemes.

## 1.4 SUMMARY OF THE MASTERPLAN



*The Pleasant Hill BART Area Master Plan*

### USES:

- Transit Facilities.
- Retail, office and lodging businesses, along with possible business conference center.
- For-sale townhouses and rental housing.
- Public parks and squares.
- Public buildings. Possible uses: daycare, cultural/educational, community theater, library, Iron Horse trail head, and/or bicycle facilities.
- Replacement of existing BART parking and the temporary parking spaces now located on the Iron Horse trail site.

### URBAN DESIGN FEATURES

- Compatibility of Use: Residential is located across from existing residential to the north and east. Office and commercial is located across from existing office to the west and south.
- Compatibility of Height: Lower buildings ranging from three to five stories are located to the north and the east across from residential. Office buildings range from seven to twelve stories and are located to the south and west across from taller commercial buildings.

### PROGRAM

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| Office:            | 290,000* - 456,000 sq. ft.+/-           |
| Residential units: | 274-446* units<br>inc. 50 for-sale min. |
| Storefront:        | 42,000 sq. ft.+/-                       |
| Civic:             | 7,000 sq. ft.+/-                        |

*\*with Block 'A' residential alternative  
Note: Numbers will be refined as design progresses consistent with the Pleasant Hill BART Property Codes.*

### BLOCK DESCRIPTIONS

#### BLOCK A:

A seven-story office building faces Treat Blvd. It includes retail businesses on the ground floor along Treat Blvd. and on the new north-south retail street. Offices wrap the perimeter of the upper levels of the parking garage. Residential uses are allowed as an alternative to office.

#### BLOCK B:

Retail uses line the ground floor on Treat Blvd. and on the north-south retail street face of Block B. Three stories of apartments are located above the storefronts on the south and west edges of the block, with townhomes wrapping the north and east sides. The inner block is a well-landscaped parking court at the second level of the parking structure.

#### BLOCK C:

A new civic building is placed next to the transit station, terminating the view up the north-south retail street. Townhomes wrap the south and east edges of Block C. A three-story commercial building shields the internal courtyard from train-related noise.

#### BLOCK D:

Block D consists of a 12-story office building. Parking for the office building is accommodated in Block E.

#### BLOCK E:

Block E provides a parking structure large enough to accommodate all replacement BART parking, as well as temporary parking east of Jones Rd. and parking for Block D. The north and west edges of the block are wrapped with four stories of apartments. A pedestrian walkway links the neighborhood across Las Juntas to the station.